

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1 – 48. (Canceled)

49. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method, comprising:
determining a weight for each tuple in a set of tuples in a database based on a number of times the tuple was accessed during one or more past queries executed against the database;

selecting a subset of sample tuples from the set of tuples database based on the determined weights of the tuples;

determining approximating an answer to a given query using the subset of sample tuples and weights of the sample tuples.

50. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 49, wherein determining approximating the answer to the given query comprises:
executing the given query against the subset of sample tuples to identify answer tuples; and
determining approximating the answer to the given query using information from the answer tuples and the weights of the answer tuples.

51. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 49, wherein determining the approximating an answer to the given query comprises:

for each sample tuple, determining a probability with which each the sample tuple in the subset of tuples was selected;

executing the given query against the subset of sample tuples to identify answer tuples; and

determining approximating the answer to the given query using information from the answer tuples and the probabilities of the answer tuples.

52. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 49, wherein determining the approximating an answer to the given query comprises:

for each sample tuple, determining a probability with which each the sample tuple in the subset of tuples was selected;

executing the given query against the subset of sample tuples to identify answer tuples; and

determining approximating the answer to the given query using information from the answer tuples and inverses of the probabilities of the answer tuples.

53. (Currently Amended) A One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions, which, when executed by a computing device, implement a method comprising:

collecting information related to one or more past queries against a the database;

examining the collected information to determine an access frequency for a number of times each tuple in a set of tuples in the database was accessed during the one or more past queries;

determining a sample-weight for each tuple in the set of tuples based on the number of times access frequency of the tuple was accessed;

selecting a subset sample of tuples from the set of tuples database based on the determined weights of the tuples;

executing a query against the subset of tuples sample to determine an approximate answer to the query made against the database.

54. (Currently Amended) The ~~one or more~~ computer-readable media of claim 53, wherein executing the query against the subset of tuples sample to determine the approximate answer to the query made against the database comprises:

for each tuple in the subset of tuples sample, determining a probability with which the tuple was selected;

executing the query against the subset of sample of tuples to identify answer tuples; and

determining the approximate answer using information from the answer tuples in the subset of tuples sample and inverses of the probabilities of the answer tuples.